

COTTON CHATS

DRAPER CORPORATION
HOPEDALE, MASSACHUSETTS



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The following from the Textile Mercury of February 11, 1922, in regard to the advantages of the Northrop Automatic Loom will be of interest to our readers:

SOME ADVANTAGES OF THE NORTHROP AUTOMATIC LOOM

At a meeting of the Blackburn Textile Society, an interesting lecture on the Northrop Automatic Loom was given in the Technical College on Friday evening by Mr. D. M. Hollins, managing director of the British Northrop Loom Company. There was a large attendance of members.

Mr. Hollins said it was admitted that we were an insular and very conservative race, and it was doubtful whether manufacturers in this country traveled abroad and studied conditions in foreign countries so much as the foreigner traveled in this country and studied our methods of manufacture. The Northrop loom had been in existence in this country for over twenty years, and the seat of manufacture had been in Blackburn for over 19 years, yet within the county boundaries of Lancashire there were only 7,000 looms, though if the area adjacent to Lancashire was included that number could be doubled. Sweden, a small

country so far as the manufacture of textiles was concerned, possessed 6,000 automatic looms today. Throughout Europe many thousands more would be found, and in the U. S. A. 400,000 of these looms were at work.

They might ask "What is the Northrop loom?" It is a loom built on engineering lines, with all the principal going parts accurately set and adjusted in relation to each other, and then fixed in such a way that they can not alter their relative positions. On that loom is fixed the Northrop battery, or magazine, which is rotary in form, and takes equally well cops or bobbins.

In conjunction with the battery there is a feeler motion, thread cutter, self-threading shuttle, a warp stop motion and an automatic let-off.

The loom is built in a great variety of weights and models, to cover a big range of goods, and additional models are continually being developed. Such a loom weaves, or can be made to weave, almost any class of goods which requires but one color and count of weft, and manufacturers would be astonished if they knew some of the difficult cloths that are being woven most successfully on Northrop looms in this country.

There was the period of the hand loom, which was followed by the power loom, and today there is

THE AGE OF AUTOMATIC LOOM

With the automatic loom they had to alter their view-point from the **maximum production per machine** to

THE MAXIMUM PRODUCTION PER WORKER

To obtain the maximum production per worker, or in other words "efficiency," it is necessary for a manufacturer to study carefully, and in detail, the following six points: planning, standardisation, organisation, staff training, selection of material, collection of data.

To deal first with the question of planning. When designing a new factory it is not sufficient to simply copy what has been done in some other factory, but it is necessary to have ideas, and while copying the best of what they had seen endeavor to go a stage further. In other words, they must be creative.

Standardisation is something they all accepted as being necessary. It is quite customary to find only one type of loom in a shed, but often several different widths of loom had been bought, when probably one or two sizes would suffice. He ventured to say that there were no two looms in any shed that were set exactly alike, although they may be weaving similar goods.

The cotton trade is recognised as being perhaps the best organised and most efficient manufacturing industry in this country; yet so far as organisation is concerned they are far behind their much abused railway companies and transatlantic steamship companies. Technical schools give theoretical training in the various industries, but this is not sufficient. It is necessary to train both practically and theoretically in the factories, and those who want to get on in the world must study for themselves in their spare time, and travel.

Selection of materials is always a difficult and somewhat uncertain undertaking, but what is it that governs their selection? Is it price? In many cases he was afraid it was, to the detriment of quality. Known characteristics and uniformity are of far greater importance than merely the

question of price, and, for automatic looms, uniformity is of paramount importance.

The collection of data is very much ignored in this country, much to their loss, as no manufacturer can know too much about the details of his business. With automatic looms the preparation of the yarn will determine to a large extent the efficiency or otherwise of the looms and the number of looms a weaver can take care of. The greatest difficulty they had to contend with in the introduction of their looms was slovenly preparation, which was not realised or believed by the manufacturers when they pointed the matter out, for a four loom weaver was so used to putting right other people's faults without undue complaints.

When the company was trying to sell its looms it was found that manufacturers had three stock objections against purchasing:—(1) loom would not make their goods; (2) loom too dear; and (3) labour objects to the loom. The first objection was generally based on an entire lack of knowledge of the loom, or a very incomplete knowledge; as regards the second, there were a sufficiently large number of satisfied and successful users to refute the statement.

While labour was quite able to speak for itself, he must in justice state his views, which were most emphatic, in declaring that labour did not object to the Northrop loom, but did object to having the looms planted on them under impossible conditions and then be expected to muddle through and come out successful, while no interest or effort was displayed by the manufacturer who bought them.

Lancashire manufacturers adopting Northrop looms had many difficulties to face. Life was made up of difficulties, but surely manufacturers were not going to let difficulties get the better of them.

